

WASHINGTON – As part of her ongoing efforts to combat identity theft and strengthen border security, Representatives Melissa Bean (D-IL-08) and Thomas Petri (R-WI-06) are introducing a bipartisan bill that would require the IRS to share information about the fraudulent use of Social Security numbers.

Currently, the IRS is prohibited from sharing information about a Social Security number used by more than one person, because the identity thief is protected by the same privacy laws that protect the taxpayer's personal information.

The *Social Security Identity Defense (SSID) Act* would require the IRS to inform the legal holder of a Social Security number if someone uses their number fraudulently. The law also requires the IRS to inform the FBI and allows them to share identity theft data with local law enforcement.

"Privacy laws are not intended to protect fraudsters or to enable illegal immigration," Bean said. "If the IRS has information about identity theft, it should share that information immediately with law enforcement and affected parties."

"The Federal Trade Commission estimates that as many as nine million Americans have their identities stolen each year," Petri said. "We should ensure that our government does all it can to help identify theft victims. This bill takes a big step in that direction."

Specifically, the bill:

- requires the IRS to inform a taxpayer when his or her Social Security Number has been used fraudulently to gain employment;
- provides that the IRS share this information with the FBI and allows the FBI to make the facts available to state and local law enforcement agencies; and
- prevents the appearance of a fraudulently used Social Security Number on a W-2 statement.

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